

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD – SERVICE RESPONSE

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION	BY WHOM	BUDGET COST	TIMESCALE
a) That the proposed Working Group referred to in relation to the development of the Community Council cluster arrangements include both Executive and non-Executive Members and should ensure representation of a range of views within the Council.	The proposal is for a cross departmental officer working group which will produce options for Member consideration. The views of non-Executive Councillors will be welcome and they will have the opportunity to comment through the scrutiny process.	Nigel Sayer	Costs in setting up the group and producing the report will come from existing resources. There might be costs attached to proposals that will have to be considered in due course.	The group will be established in May with a report being produced for Member consideration in September, 2007
b) That the proposed Working Group to examine the potential improvements to the links between community workers and Ward Councillors should include both Executive and non-Executive Members, as in recommendation a).	(See above comments)	Nigel Sayer	(See above comments)	(See above comments)
c) That the feasibility of combining the proposed working groups identified in recommendations a) and b) above be examined.	This issue has been examined and it is considered feasible to combine the two working groups.	Nigel Sayer	Nil	May 2007

<p>d)That the proposals in the White Paper, specifically the concept of Councils allocating a small budget to Ward Councillors, be supported.</p>	<p>The issue of ward-based budgets was considered by the Executive as part of the response to the original scrutiny and the position has not changed. The White Paper makes it clear that each Council should consider what is appropriate for its own area and circumstances and that ‘people no longer accept the “one size fits all” service models of old.’</p>	<p>Nigel Sayer</p>	<p>Nil</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>e)That, in the meantime, the means by which Members have access to existing budgets be improved and the possibility of enabling Ward Members to access small capital and/or revenue budgets be examined.</p>	<p>The working group will examine, as part of the Civil Renewal Strategy, ways in which to improve the access to and provision of information to Members. This will specifically include promoting opportunities to access funding streams such as the Youth Opportunities Fund and voluntary sector grants.</p> <p>Other opportunities also currently exist for Members to seek funding and include the capital programme small schemes allocation where seven Councillors submitted bids.</p> <p>All Members were also invited to bid for funding to carry out a range of environmental improvements in their areas as part of a ‘one off’ allocation of funding from within Environment’s Reserves and Balances budget of £1.5 million.</p> <p>(PTO)</p>	<p>Nigel Sayer</p>	<p>Nil</p>	<p>The work proposed to be undertaken under these actions will be included in the report to be submitted to Members in September, 2007.</p>

	In this regard, each Councillor received a letter (attached as an appendix) from the portfolio holder inviting suggestions for funding. The take up was disappointingly low. This may suggest that ward level budgets are not a pressing need at the moment.			
f)That the outcome of consideration by the Executive of the report submitted together with the above recommendations be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.	The decisions taken by the Executive in this regard will be reported to the next scheduled meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.	Nigel Sayer	Nil	May, 2007